

What federal offices are involved in the financial management of Indian Trust Funds?

The Office of Special Trustee in Washington, DC and the Office of Trust Funds Management (OTFM) in Albuquerque, New Mexico, direct the financial management of the trust funds. The Office of Trust Litigation Support and Records (OTLSR), also in Albuquerque, New Mexico, is responsible for the management of all financial documents and other trust fund records.

What does the Office of Trust Funds Management do?

OTFM receipts, invests and disburses Indian trust funds both to tribal account holders and individual beneficiaries.

Is OTFM part of BIA?

No. In 1996, OTFM and the related financial trust functions of field offices were transferred from the Bureau of Indian Affairs to the Office of Special Trustee for American Indians (OST). The Director of OTFM reports to the Office of the Special Trustee.

How much money does OTFM manage?

Funds retained in Federal Indian Trust Accounts amount to approximately \$3 billion. About \$480 million is owned by individuals, the rest is held by tribes. The funds are held in U.S. Trust for over 315 tribes and approximately 285,000 individuals.

Each year, more than \$800 million passes through the Tribal trust funds system and over \$300 million passes through the Individual Indian Monies (IIM) trust fund accounts. Investment earnings make up a significant portion of the total receipts.

Where does the money come from?

Funds are derived from the sale or rental of Indian-owned natural resources such as timber or grazing land, and royalties from oil and natural gas exploration and production. Funds also are derived from awards or settlements of tribal claims for lost land or other damages. Interest earned on the invested funds also is part of the fund.

Is OTFM responsible for the management of trust land and resources?

No. OTFM only handles the financial portion of the trust. The Bureau of Indian Affairs is responsible for the proper management of approximately 56 million acres of Indian land and the associated trust resources. This responsibility includes tracking the ownership status of the land as well as issuing contracts and other agreements for the sale, use, exploration or lease of the resource.

What is TFAS?

TFAS stands for the Trust Funds Accounting System that has been newly implemented in nine of the twelve BIA Regional offices. TFAS is a state-of-the-art, commercial trust fund accounting system that provides for receipting collections, as well as accounting, investment, disbursing and reporting functions to OTFM, IIM and Tribal accountholders. The three remaining BIA Regional offices are scheduled be fully converted to TFAS this spring.

Who can I call if I have questions?

OTFM operates a toll free accountholder help line. The number is 1-888-OST-OTFM or 1-888-678-6836.